

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Douglas/Quikut

#### Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions

#### Lean Manufacturing Training and Kaizen Implementation

##### Client Profile:

Douglas Quikut is a manufacturer of ReadiVac vacuum cleaners operating out of an 85,000 square foot facility in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas. The company employs approximately 90 personnel. Douglas Quikut also produces Ginsu Knives in a nearby facility.

##### Situation:

In recent years, Douglas Quikut has come under serious pressure from foreign competition and has been striving to make process improvements that will ultimately reduce costs and allow the facility to maintain a competitive presence in the market. In that regard, the company requested assistance from Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions (AMS), a NIST MEP network affiliate, with training of their employees in the concepts of Lean Manufacturing, the development of Current State and Future State Maps for their main product lines and the facilitation/implementation of specific Kaizen Events necessary to achieve their desired Future State.

##### Solution:

AMS Project Manager, Bill Kraus, along with third party consultants Charley Appleby and Jerry McKelroy from the ASU Delta Center for Economic Development, provided training and consulting services to Douglas Quikut in accordance with the project plan. A Principles of Lean Manufacturing seminar was presented to the management team and representatives from the factory floor. Selected members then participated in Value Stream Mapping training during which the Current and Future state maps of the manufacturing processes were developed. Areas of opportunity to improve productivity, enhance workplace organization and reduce work in process inventory levels were identified. A sequence and priority in which to implement specific Kaizen improvements on the floor were established and implemented. Key components of the Kaizen implementation plan included elements of 5S workplace organization, line balancing, quick changeover workflow reorganization, and tracking of productivity.

##### Results:

- \* Reduced changeovers in molding from 2 hours to 25 minutes.
- \* Increased productivity by 70 percent.
- \* Achieved and sustained a savings of \$9000 per month.

##### Testimonial:

"We are very satisfied with the experience and results from this project. Bill and Charley were very professional and very informative about Lean and process improvement methods. They made the learning experience fun. Their depth of knowledge in Lean helped us realize improvement from which we continue to reap the benefits. "

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Nathan Howard , General Manager